



BOROUGH OF ABERGAVENNY  
1947

REPORT ON THE SANITARY  
CONDITIONS OF THE BOROUGH

prepared by the  
Medical Officer of Health  
**H. L. S. GRIFFITHS,**  
M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.)

THE 65TH  
ANNUAL REPORT

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## PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.



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THE MAYOR (Councillor B. R. GRIFFITH).

Alderman W. HORSINGTON.

Councillors J. S. BOUSFIELD.

E. REES.

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G. H. TRANTER.



# Medical Officer's Report for 1947.

MR. MAYOR, AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg herewith to present the Sixty-Fifth Annual Report on the Sanitary Conditions of Abergavenny, which is based on the Ministry of Health Circular 13/47 (Wales).

This is my Twenty-third and last report, as it is proposed to amalgamate the Borough and certain of the surrounding Local Authorities into one unit having a full time Medical Officer of Health.

May I take this opportunity of thanking you and your predecessors for your co-operation and consideration.

| Statistics.                                       | 1938    | 1945    | 1946    | 1947     |
|---|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Area (in Acres) ...                               | 2,398   | 2,398   | 2,398   | 2,398    |
| Population (estimated) ..                         | 7,925   | 8,275   | 8,439   | 8,427    |
| Inhabited Houses (according to<br>Rate Books) ... | 2,366   | 2,314   | 2,310   | 2,388    |
| Rateable Value ...                                | £49,304 | £51,222 | £51,395 | £51,658. |
| Id. Rate ...                                      | £188    | £198    | £201    | £202     |

Social conditions, including chief industries carried on in the area, and the extent of unemployment :

The area of the Borough is 2,398 acres, but the added area is mostly rural in character, and includes most of the Sugar Loaf Mountain where are situated the Borough Reservoir, Pumping Station, Springs, etc.

Abergavenny is a prosperous County Town with large Cattle, Fruit, Farm and Produce Markets. It is also a Live Stock Grading Centre for the Ministry of Food.

It is a centre of the L.M.S. Railway, and is also served by the G W. Railway, and a good service of Motor Buses is run in all directions to and from the Borough and adjoining villages and Towns.

There is one large Printing Factory and three smaller ones, one Engineering Works and Foundry, and one manufacturing Confectionery, with some small light industries, such as Mineral Waters, Soft toys, etc.

The unemployment figure for Abergavenny and District with a population of some 16,000 showed a weekly average of 60 per week, or a weekly rate of 3'85 per 1,000.

The Shops in the town are numerous, and cater not only for the town folk, but those of the large surrounding districts. The prosperity of the Borough as a whole is greatly affected by the prosperity of the Industrial Districts adjoining.

There is no particular occupation that adversely affects the Public Health of the Borough.

# VITAL STATISTICS.

Total 1947      M.   F.      1947    Borough County

## Live Births—

|              |     |    |    |  |      |      |
|--------------|-----|----|----|--|------|------|
| Legitimate   | 143 | 68 | 75 | } Birthrate per 1,000 of<br>estimated resident<br>population ... | 18'0 | 21'3 |
| Illegitimate | 9   | 6  | 3  |  |      |      |
| Total        | 152 | 74 | 78 |  |      |      |

## Still Births—

|              |    |   |   |  |      |           |
|--------------|----|---|---|--|------|-----------|
| Legitimate   | 10 | 3 | 7 | } Rate per 1,000 total<br>(Live & Stillbirths)<br>Births ... | 75'5 | not given |
| Illegitimate | 1  | — | 1 |  |      |           |
| Total        | 11 | 3 | 8 |  |      |           |
|              |    |   |   | Rate per 1,000 popul'n                                       | 1'3  | 0'59      |

## Deaths—

|            |     |    |    |   |      |      |
|------------|-----|----|----|---|------|------|
| All Causes | 115 | 59 | 56 | } Death Rate per 1,000<br>of estimated resident<br>population ... | 13'6 | 12'3 |
|            |     |    |    |   |      |      |

## Deaths from Puerperal Causes—

|                            |     |  |               |      |
|----------------------------|-----|--|---------------|------|
| Puerperal Sepsis ...       | Nil | } Rate per 1,000 births<br>(Live and Stillborn)... | Nil           | 0'14 |
| Other Puerperal Causes ... | Nil |  | Nil           | 1'02 |
|                            |     |  |               |      |
| Total                      | Nil |  | Total ... Nil | 1'16 |

## Death Rate of Infants under one year of age—

|   |      |      |
|---|------|------|
| All Infants per 1,000 Live Births ...               | 46'0 | 44'9 |
| Legitimate      „      Legitimate Live Births ...   | 49'6 | —    |
| Illegitimate    „      Illegitimate      „      ... | Nil  | —    |

Deaths from Cancer—all ages...M 9.   F 11.   Total 20.

Average age 71'6

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Measles ...                       | Nil              |
| Whooping Cough ...                | Nil              |
| Diarrhœa, under 2 yrs. of age ... | Nil              |
| Children under 1 yr.    Total 7.  | Legitimate 7     |
|                                   | Illegitimate Nil |
| Tuberculosis Pulmonary ...        | 4   M 3.   F 1   |
| Non-Pulmonary ...                 | Nil              |
|                                   | — Total 4.       |

# Ages of Deaths of Children under one year of age—

|                    |     |     |   |     |          |
|--------------------|-----|-----|---|-----|----------|
| Under 1 week       | ... | ... | 1 | }   | 1        |
| 1 to 2 weeks       | ... | ... | — |     |          |
| 2 to 3 "           | ... | ... | — |     |          |
| 3 to 4 "           | ... | ... | — |     |          |
| 1 to 3 months      | ... | ... | 2 | }   | 6        |
| 3 to 6 "           | ... | ... | 2 |     |          |
| 6 to 9 "           | ... | ... | 1 |     |          |
| 9 to 12 "          | ... | ... | 1 |     |          |
| Total under 1 year |     |     |   | ... | <u>7</u> |

| Year. | Populations.           | Live Births. | Deaths. | Birth Rate. |
|-------|------------------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| 1931  | ... 8490 (Estimated)   |              |         |             |
|       | 8608 (Census)          | ... 137      | 119     | 16'10       |
| 1938  | ... 7925 (New Borough) | .. 115       | 108     | 14'50       |
| 1939  | ... 7832               | ... 118      | 144     | 15'10       |
| 1940  | ... 8407               | ... 122      | 149     | 14'50       |
| 1941  | .. 8769                | ... 130      | 135     | 14'60       |
| 1942  | .. 8468                | ... 134      | 113     | 18'80       |
| 1943  | ... 8174               | ... 127      | 122     | 15'56       |
| 1944  | ... 7931               | ... 139      | 104     | 17'50       |
| 1945  | .. 8275                | ... 141      | 120     | 17.0        |
| 1946  | ... 8439               | ... 147      | 110     | 17'5        |
| 1947  | .. 8427                | ... 152      | 115     | 18'0        |

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

**Scarlet Fever.** There was a mild epidemic from October to December in which 24 cases were notified. During the whole year 28 cases were notified.

**Whooping Cough.** Seven cases were notified.  
There were no deaths.

**Measles.** 80 cases were notified.

**Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis.** Nil.

**Erysipelas.** Nil.

**Infantile Paralysis.** One case, a female, was notified.

**Diphtheria.** Nil.

Immunisation has been encouraged in all possible ways.

|                          |     |           |     |    |
|--------------------------|-----|-----------|-----|----|
| Number immunised in 1947 | ... | Age 1 — 5 | ... | 80 |
|                          |     | Age 5—15  | ... | 8  |

|       |     |    |
|-------|-----|----|
| Total | ... | 88 |
|-------|-----|----|

16 other children had Refresher Injections.

### Tuberculosis.

Notified : Pulmonary M 3. F 2. Non-Pulmonary M— F—

Deaths : „ M 3. F. 1. „ M— F—

**Influenza.** No severe epidemic. One death.

**Notifiable Infectious Disease (other than Tuberculosis)**  
classified according to age groups.

| Disease.               | Total | Age<br>0—5 | 5—10 | 10—15 | 15—25 | Over<br>25 | Treated<br>in<br>Hosp'l |
|------------------------|-------|------------|------|-------|-------|------------|-------------------------|
| Diphtheria             | 3     | ...        | 1    | 2     | ...   | ...        | 3                       |
| Scarlet Fever          | 28    | 8          | 8    | 11    | 1     | ...        | 9                       |
| C.S. Meningitis        | ...   | ...        | ...  | ...   | ...   | ...        | ...                     |
| Measles                | 80    | 36         | 38   | 5     | ...   | 1          | ...                     |
| Whooping Cough         | 7     | 7          | ...  | ...   | ...   | ...        | ...                     |
| Enteric Fever (Para B) | ...   | ...        | ...  | ...   | ...   | ...        | ...                     |
| Infantile Paralysis    | 1     | ...        | ...  | ...   | 1     | ...        | 1                       |

### TUBERCULOSIS.

New cases and Mortality during 1947.

| AGE.   | NEW CASES. |     |               |     | DEATHS.   |     |               |     |
|--------|------------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|
|        | Pulmonary  |     | Non-Pulmonary |     | Pulmonary |     | Non-Pulmonary |     |
|        | M          | F   | M             | F   | M         | F   | M             | F   |
| 0—1    | ...        | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| 1—5    | ...        | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| 5—10   | ...        | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| 10—15  | ...        | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| 15—20  | ...        | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| 20—30  | 1          | 2   | ...           | ... | 2         | ... | ...           | ... |
| 30—40  | ...        | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| 40—50  | 1          | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| 50—60  | 1          | ... | ...           | ... | 1         | 1   | ...           | ... |
| 60—70  | ...        | ... | ...           | ... | ...       | ... | ...           | ... |
| Totals | 3          | 2   | ...           | ... | 3         | 1   | ...           | ... |

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## Water.

The Water is maintained in a pure state by chlorination. 13 samples of treated water were taken for bacteriological examination and 1 for chemical analysis. 4 bacteriological samples were found to be unsatisfactory. Necessary adjustments to the chlorine content were made immediately and satisfactory results were obtained.

Of 2,394 houses in the Borough, 2,301 houses representing a population of 8,300, are supplied direct to the houses, while 93 houses with 319 population receive their water by standpipes.

There is no plumbo-solvency, and due to the prolonged periods of wet weather, the quantity adequate. In view of the proposed increase in the number of houses, a scheme for the provision of a further source of supply is being developed by the local Authority.

## Housing.

34 New permanent houses were completed on the Pitts' Nursery Site, which has been prepared for 74 houses. 50 'Arcon,' Mark V. temporary bungalows were erected on the Ysguborwen Site.

## INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

|         |  |     |
|---------|--|-----|
| (8) (a) | Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... ..   | 595 |
| (b)     | Number of inspections made for the purpose ...   | 603 |
| (2) (a) | Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above which are inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulation, 1925 ... ..               | 340 |
| (b)     | Number of inspections made for the purpose ...   | 348 |
| (3)     | Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... ..                                    | 5   |
| (4)     | Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... .. | 52  |

## Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal notices :

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequences of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ... .. | 55 |
|---|----|

## Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

|   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | ... | Nil |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices : |     |     |
| (a) By Owners   | ... | Nil |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of owners   | ... | Nil |

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

|  |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | ... | 2   |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices           | ... | 2   |
| (a) By Owners  | ... | 2   |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of owners  | ... | Nil |

(c) Proceedings under section 11 of the Housing Act, 1930 :

|   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | ... | Nil |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders    | ... | Nil |

(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1930 :

|   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| (1) Number of separate tenements of underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made  | ... | Nil |
| (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit | ... | Nil |

## ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

The following table shows the Inspector's work regarding the eradication of bed bugs.

### (a) Number of Council Houses :

|      |                |     |     |      |
|------|----------------|-----|-----|------|
| (1)  | Found infested | ... | ... | Nil. |
| (11) | Disinfested    | ... | ... | Nil. |

### (b) Number of other Houses :

|      |                |     |     |   |
|------|----------------|-----|-----|---|
| (1)  | Found infested | ... | ... | 2 |
| (11) | Disinfested    | ... | ... | 2 |

These houses were visited either in normal house-to-house inspections or as a result of complaints from the tenant.

Excellent results have been obtained by cleaning and scrubbing, carried out systematically with soap and water. In addition, sulphur fumigation and insecticide sprays were used.

## INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOODS.

### Milk Supply—

5 visits have been made to Cowsheds and Dairies.

7 samples of milk were taken and 3 were found unsatisfactory. The matter was taken up with the retailer and producer, and was also referred to the responsible Authority.

### Meat and other Foods—

The Local Authority Abattoir, which was taken over by the Ministry of Food, serves the district of Abergavenny, Crickhowell, Bwlch, Nantyerry and Gobion. A 100% inspection is maintained by the Sanitary Inspector, 281 visits having been made for that purpose.

The following tables showing the number killed, particulars of meat condemnations and incidence of disease.

#### Number Killed :

| Cattle. | Calves. | Sheep & Lambs. | Pigs. |
|---------|---------|----------------|-------|
| 766     | 638     | 7,372          | 757   |

#### Number Inspected :

|     |     |       |     |
|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| 766 | 638 | 7,372 | 757 |
|-----|-----|-------|-----|

Total inspected—9,533.

# All Diseases except Tuberculosis :

## Whole carcasses condemned—

| Cattle. | Calves. | Sheep & Lambs. | Pigs |
|---------|---------|----------------|------|
| 20      | 3       | 41             | 5    |

## Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned—

| Cattle. | Calves. | Sheep & Lambs. | Pigs. |
|---------|---------|----------------|-------|
| 200     | 2       | 1,047          | 3     |

Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis—13.4%

# Tuberculosis only :

## Whole carcasses condemned—

| Cattle. | Calves. | Sheep & Lambs. | Pigs. |
|---------|---------|----------------|-------|
| 16      | —       | —              | 4     |

## Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned—

| Cattle. | Calves. | Sheep & Lambs. | Pigs. |
|---------|---------|----------------|-------|
| 63      | 3       | —              | 31    |

Percentage of the number of animals killed affected with Tuberculosis—0.91%

Percentage of the number of cattle killed affected with Tuberculosis—10.3%

## Other Foods condemned were as follows.

37 Tins Nestles Milk; 686 Tins Evaporated Milk; 143 Tins Beans; 81 Tins Peas; 36 Tins Salmon; 31 Tins Pilchards; 18 Tins Sardines; 113 lbs. Dried Milk; 13 Tins Sausages; 1 Tin Spaghetti; 3 Tins Prem; 4 Tins Luncheon Meat; 11 Tins Pressed Beef; 3 Tins Brisket Beef; 1 Tin Veal Loaf; 13 Tins Minced Beef Loaf; 293 lbs. Imported Beef; 4 Tins Meat & Veg. Ration; 21 Tins Stewed Steak; 28 Tins Steak & Kidney Pudding; 2 Tins Chicken & Ham Roll; 3 Xmas Puddings; 32 Tins Soups; 7 Tins Irish Stew; 24 Packets Soups; 1 Tin Chopped Ham; 351 lbs. Bacon; 3 Tins Bacon; 5 lbs. Cheese; 27 lbs. Butter; 5½ lbs. Butter Beans; 1 Jar Bovril; 1 Jar Mince Meat; 104 Tins Jam; 8 Tins Fruit Salad; 30 lbs. Dried Peaches; 1 Tin Orange Juice; 16 Bottles Pickles; 2 Tins Cod Liver Roe; 14 Tins Silver Hake; 30 lbs. Cod; 20 lbs. Lobster; 686 lbs. Kippers; 84 lbs. Herrings; 5 Tins Whiting; 1 gross Fish Cakes; 4 Tins Fish Cakes; 19 Tins Carrots; 27 Tins Beetroot; 3 Jars Chutney; 1 Bottle Vinegar; 6 lbs. Flour; 12 Tins Grape Fruit; 18 Tins Tomatoes; 18 lbs. Cocoa; 2 Bottles Coffee; 1 Tin Potatoes; 13 lbs. Sultanas; 1 Tin Rhubarb; 8 Tins Fruit Cocktail; 1 Tin Onion Cocktail; 3 Tins Golden Syrup; 9 Tins & 3 Jars Marmalade; 53 Tins Peaches; 9 Tins Apricots; 4 Tins Damsons; 2 Tins Plums; 7 Bottles Sauce.

## **Inspection of Places where Food is prepared.**

**Restaurant Kitchens :—** Including Licensed Premises where food is prepared, there are 12 in the Borough.

**Fish Frying and Chip Potato Shops :—** There are 3 in the Borough, and these are regularly visited by the Sanitary Inspector, who reports favourable as to their condition and absence of nuisance.

**Bakehouses :—** 11 premises were in use during the year.

22 visits were made during the year.

4 notices of repairs and lime-washing, etc., were served.

The conditions generally were satisfactory.

**Butchers :—** Small goods, including brawn, polonies, pies, faggots, etc., were prepared at 9 Butchers' establishments. At the Butchers' establishments the work is carried out in a special room, and electric power is available. All the premises are regularly visited by the Inspector, and the condition found to be satisfactory.

## **Shops Act, 1934.**

54 premises were inspected. Defects in 23 premises were remedied after verbal notice.

## **FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.**

~~47~~ visits were made, and conditions were found to be satisfactory.

**Rodent Control.** One operator was employed full-time and two assistants on part-time duty during the operation of the scheme as laid down in Circular N.S. 12 of the Ministry of Food. This scheme was completed on May 31st. Thereafter, one full-time operator was employed. During the year, 156 premises were treated, comprising 87 domestic premises and 69 business premises. Two maintenance treatments were carried out in the Sewers. The Refuse Tip and Sewage Banks were treated at regular intervals of 3 months. A total kill of 3,159 was recorded, as estimated according to the Ministry of Food formula.

# RAINFALL IN 1946.

Rain Gauge ... { Diameter of Funnel, 5 inches.  
 Height of Top } Above Ground 1 ft.  
 „ Sea Level 215 ft.  
 Situation :—Bailey Park.

| <i>Month</i> |     | <i>Total Depth Inches</i> |
|--------------|-----|---------------------------|
| January      | ... | 4'0                       |
| February     | ... | 0'2                       |
| March        | ... | 3'8                       |
| April        | ... | 4'0                       |
| May          | ... | 5 5                       |
| June         | ... | 2'0                       |
| July         | ... | 2'0                       |
| August       | ... | 0'9                       |
| September    | ... | 1'17                      |
| October      | ... | 0'60                      |
| November     | ... | 3'14                      |
| December     | ... | 2'6                       |
| Total        |     | <u>29'91</u>              |

R. J. HOWELLS, Cert. S.I.B., I.M. & O.F.



